Sanctification: A Meta-Analytic Review

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Abstract

The authors reviewed 37 studies (*n* cases = 361) published in peer-reviewed journals from 1999 to September 2014 that evaluated relationships between sanctification and various correlates. Meta-analytic techniques were used to convert sanctification-correlate associations into standardized effect size z*r*'s. Using a random effects model, a significant relationship emerged between sanctification and all correlates, z*r* = .26 (95% C.I. = .23-.28). This indicates that sanctification has a moderate relationship with positive psychological variables.

Introduction

- Sanctification: "perceiving an aspect of life as having divine significance and character" (Mahoney, Pargament, & Hernandez, 2013)
- Sanctification can occur in various domains:

Relational	Non-Relational
Marriage/Romantic Relationships	Strivings
Parenting	Body
Pregnancy	Work
Sexuality	Environment
	Forgiveness
	Dreams

- Sanctification has theistic and non-theistic components, measured respectively:
  - Theistic: viewing a domain as a *manifestation of God* or the divine (MG scale)
  - Non-theistic: viewing a domain as having *sacred qualities* (SQ scale)

Goals of Meta-Analysis

1. Summarize the literature on sanctification.
2. Assess the magnitude of the relationship between sanctification and outcome variables (e.g., relationship satisfaction, investment, and commitment).

We predict that sanctification permeates into both relational and non-relational aspects of everyday living, correlating with positive outcomes.

References

Mahoney, A., Pargament, K. I., & Hernandez, K. M. (2013). Heaven on earth: Beneficial effects of sanctification for individual and interpersonal well-being. J. Henry (Ed.), The Oxford handbook of happiness (pp. 397-410). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

For a full list of studies included in the meta-analysis, please see our handout.

We would like to acknowledge Dr. William O'Brien for his help in making this research possible.

Methods

- Title & abstract search for "sanctification" and "sanctified" in PsycINFO and Psychology & Behavioral Sciences Collection yielded 144 studies
- After reviewing abstracts for relevance, 36 articles were identified for full review
- Conducted Web of Science reverse citation search and found an additional 11 studies for full review
- Overall, 37 studies met inclusion criteria: quantitative methods, peer-reviewed, construct validity

	Study	Group	N	Sample Type
1	Ellison, Henderson, Glenn, & Harkrider, 2011	Marriage	1227	Community
2	Fincham, Lambert, & Beach, 2010	Marriage	83	College Students
3	Kusner, Mahoney, Pargament, & DeMaris, 2014	Marriage	164	Community
4	Lichter & Carmalt, 2008	Marriage	433	National
5	Mahoney et al., 1999	Marriage	97	Community
6	Mahoney, Pargament, & DeMaris, 2009	Marriage, Pregnancy	178	Community
7	Stafford, David, & McPherson, 2014	Marriage	684	Community
8	Brelsford, 2013	Parenting	272	Community
9	DeMaris, Mahoney, & Pargament, 2011	Parenting	338	Community
10	Dumas & Nissley-Tsiopinis, 2006	Parenting	149	Community
11	Murray-Swank, Mahoney, & Pargament, 2006	Parenting	74	Community
12	Volling, Mahoney, & Rauer, 2009	Parenting	110	Community
13	Weyand, O'Laughlin, & Bennett, 2013	Parenting	139	Community
14	Hernandez, Mahoney, Pargament, 2011	Sexuality	83	Community
15	Murray-Swank, Pargament, & Mahoney, 2005	Sexuality	151	Community
16	Chan, 2014	Strivings	126	College Students
17	Emmons & Kneezel, 2005	Strivings	135	Community
18	Mahoney et al., 2005	Strivings	150	Community
19	Martos, Kézdy, & Horváth- Szabó, 2011	Strivings	158	Community
20	Todd, Houston, & Odahl-Ruan, 2014	Strivings	484	College students
21	Todd, McConnell, & Suffrin, 2014	Strivings	500	College students
22	Benjamins, Ellison, Krause, & Marcum, 2011	Body	1076	National
23	Ellison et al., 2008	Body	1107	National
24	Grossoehme et al., 2011	Body	24	Community
25	Grossoehme, VanDyke, & Seid, 2008	Body	124	Community
26	Homan & Boyatzis, 2009	Body	127	Community
27	Homan & Boyatzis, 2010	Body	160	Community
28	Jacobsen, Hall & Anderson, 2013	Body	187	College students
29	Mahoney, Carels, Pargament et al., 2005	Body	289	College students
30	Carroll, Stewart-Sicking, & Thompson, 2014	Work	827	Community
31	Hall, Oates, Anderson, & Willingham, 2012	Work	200	Community
32	Walker, Jones, Wuensch, Aziz, & Cope, 2008	Work	103	Community
33	Walker, Smither, & DeBode, 2012	Work	220	National
34	Tarakeshwar, Swank, Pargament, & Mahoney, 2001	Environment	618-631[a] 578-586[b] 1178-1200[c]	National
35	Bell et al., 2014	Forgiveness	307	College students
36	Davis, Hook, Van Tongeren, Worthington, 2012	Forgiveness	123	College students
37	Phillips & Pargament, 2002	Dreaming	163	College students

[a] church members, [b] elders, [c] clergy

Coding Policies & Data Analyses

- 100% double-coding of bivariate correlations
- Assigned conservative value of *p* = .5 (i.e., *zr* = 0) for unreported or non-significant findings
- Converted *r* to *zr* (weighted by sample size)
- Aggregated *zr*'s for overall effect size of sanctification and domains

Results

- 37 studies yielded 361 sanctification-outcome correlations
- 22 community, 10 college, 5 national samples
- 83% Caucasian, 85% Christian, 58% female
- Sanctification measures: α = .92

Grouping	# studies	n cases	zr	95% C.I.	Heterogeneity test (p)
All studies	37	361	.26	.23-.28	.01*
Marriage/Romantic Relationships	7	86	.32	.27-.38	.06
Parenting	6	57	.19	.13-.24	.68
Sexuality	2	17	.22	.14-.30	.32
Pregnancy[f]	1	12	.88	.83-.93	<.001*
Strivings	6	58	.33	.26-.40	.17
Body	8	73	.11	.08-.14	.56
Work	4	17	.22	.13-31	.15
Environment[f]	1	18	.12	.10-.14	.003*
Forgiveness	2	13	.20	.07-.33	.29
Dreaming[f]	1	10	.21	.15-.27	<.001*
Relational Sanctification	16	172	.31	.27-.35	.17
Non-relational Sanctification	24	189	.21	.18-.23	.02*
MG Subscale	-	157	.24	.19-.28	.12
SQ Subscale	-	135	.30	.26-.34	.15
Combined Sanctification	-	43	.18	.13-.22	.92
Total Sanctification	-	335	.25	.23-.28	.008*

[a] C.I. = confidence interval, MG = Manifestation of God, SQ = Sacred Qualities, Total Sanctification = All MG, SQ, and Combined Sanctification measures; [f]Fixed effects models were selected for groupings with only 1 study.
*When *p* < .05, effect sizes showed heterogeneity within the grouping.

Publication Bias Assessment

- Kendall's tau = -.146 (*p* < .001)
- Rosenthal's Method = 564,633

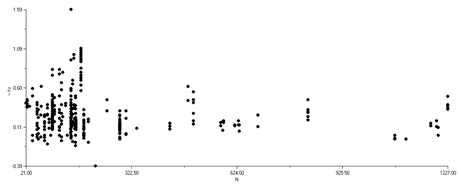

Figure 1. Funnel plot of *zr*'s by *N*.

Recommendations & Conclusion

- Longitudinal studies recommended, especially with more diverse populations
- Expansion of research to other sanctified domains

Overall, there is a moderate relationship (*zr* = .26) between sanctification and positive psychological variables, including relationship satisfaction, investment, and commitment.